

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 18915

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, JA, US
SUBJECT: FUKUDA DESIRE FOR EARLY SUMMITS

REF: TOKYO 18858

1. AMERICAN AFFAIRS DEPUTY DIRGEN ASAO TOLD DCM
DECEMBER 28 THAT PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA MOST ANXIOUS TO
MEET WITH PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER AT EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY.
THIS MATTER DISCUSSED DECEMBER 27 BY PRIME MINISTER
WITH VICE FOREIGN MINISTER SATO AND CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY
SONODA. AS RESULT, AMBASSADOR TOGO IS TO RECEIVE
INSTRUCTIONS WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS TO CONVEY TO NEW
ADMINISTRATION FUKUDA'S DESIRE TO MEET WITH CARTER
AT EARLIEST MUTUALLY CONVENIENT DATE AND TO EXPLORE
TIMING US SIDE.

2. ALSO MENTIONED THAT GIVEN SCHEDULE OF FORTHCOMING
REGULAR SESSION OF DIET, EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE WHEN
FUKUDA COULD TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON WOULD BE LATTER
PART OF FEBRUARY WHEN SUBCOMMITTEES OF LOWER HOUSE
BUDGET COMMITTEE BEGIN THEIR DETAILED EXAMINATION OF
BUDGET. IF, HOWEVER, OPPOSITION PARTY AGREEMENT TO
PRIME MINISTER'S ABSENCE FROM COUNTRY COULD NOT BE
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OBTAINED AT THAT TIME, NEXT OPPORTUNITY WOULD
NOT OCCUR UNTIL LATE MARCH OR EARLY APRIL AFTER COMPLETION
OF LOWER HOUSE CONSIDERATION OF BUDGET.

3. ASAO ASKED THAT INFORMATION IN PARAGRAPH 2 BE
HELD CLOSELY BY DEPARTMENT UNTIL FOREIGN OFFICE HAD

SENT INSTRUCTIONS TO AMBASSADOR TOGO AND HE HAD HAD OPPORTUNITY TO ACT UPON THEM. (INCIDENTALLY, ASAO MENTIONED THAT AMBASSADOR TOGO HAD BEEN TOLD BY OFFICE OF CHIEF OF PROTOCOL IN DEPARTMENT THAT SEVERAL OTHER GOVERNMENTS ALREADY HAD INDICATED TO DEPARTMENT DESIRE OF THEIR LEADERS TO MEET WITH CARTER SOON AFTER START OF HIS ADMINISTRATION.)

4. FUKUDA HOPE FOR EARLY MEETING WITH CARTER IS IN PUBLIC DOMAIN, PRIMIN HAVING TOUCHED ON IT IN DECEMBER 25 PRESS CONFERENCE (REFTEL). PRESS HAS ALSO REPORTED THAT PROSPECTIVE TRIP WAS DISCUSSED AT MEETING ASAO REFERRED TO, IN CONJUNCTION WITH DESIRABILITY OF ADVANCED NATIONS' SUMMIT. YOMIURI ADDED, INACCURATELY, THAT INSTRUCTION HAD ALREADY BEEN SENT TO AMBASSADOR TOGO TO SOUND OUT NEW ADMINISTRATION.

5. IN ANOTHER CONVERSATION DEPDIR NAKAHIRA OF FON OFF ECON BUREAU, WHO HAS HAD CHARGE OF PREPARATORY WORK FOR EARLIER ECONOMIC SUMMITS, UNOFFICIALLY TOLD ECON COUNSELOR THAT AT SAME MEETING FUKUDA AGREED THAT ADVANCED NATIONS' SUMMIT WOULD BE DESIRABLE IN APRIL, A POSITION FONOFF ENDORSES. NEITHER ASAO NOR NAKAHIRA TOUCHED ON RELATIONSHIP OF TWO EVENTS, BUT WE SEE NO REASON TO DOUBT THAT, IF POSSIBLE, FUKUDA WOULD PREFER TRIP TO ESTABLISH BILATERAL RAPPORT WITH NEW US ADMINISTRATION BEFORE ADVANCED NATIONS' SUMMIT.
HODGSON

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